Agri SA

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Agri SA doen beroep op regering om droogtehulp te verleen
Agri SA calls on government to provide drought assistance

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Boere in sekere dele van Suid-Afrika sukkel om die huidige seisoen te oorleef en Agri SA is besorg oor hul lewensvatbaarheid op die pad vorentoe. Agri SA het sy bes gedoen om behoeftige boere landwyd van noodhulp in die vorm van vee- en kuilvoer te voorsien.

“Dit is nou tyd vir die regering om in te gryp met hulpverlening aan kommersiële en kleinskaalse boere,” sê Johannes Moller, President van Agri SA. “As boerederysektor en as landburgers, belastingbetalers en bydraers tot die ekonomie, verteenwoordig ons ‘n belangrike belastingbasis. Dit is skandelik dat die kommersiële landbou- en opkomende boeresektore geen hulp van die regering ontvang het nie. Tot dusvêr het ons geen sent van die regering ontvang nie,” aldus Omri van Zyl, hoof uitvoerende beampte van Agri SA. Dit blyk dat die regering nie toegerus is om rampe van hierdie omvang te hanteer nie; verder is dit kommerwekkend dat die veiligheidsnet vir Suid-Afrikaners sodanig verswak het dat hulpverlening nie moontlik is nie,” sê Van Zyl.

Möller meld dat, in teenstelling hiermee “het die Tesourie onlangs staatswaarborge ter waarde van nagenoeg R14,4 miljard, met ‘n verdere R5 miljard, goedgekeur vir die Suid-Afrikaanse Lugdiens (SAA). Eskom, met staatswaarborge van R466 miljard, het sy *prudency* -limiet bereik in hierdie verband.

Die landbousektor se omset is nagenoeg R227 miljard per jaar, met ‘n netto-belastingbydrae van ongeveer R50 miljard deur die primêre landbousektor alleen oor die afgelope 10 jaar. Ons bied werk aan meer as 850 000 mense in die sektor en is die enigste voedselseker-land in sub-Sahara-Afrika. “Hoe beskerm jy hierdie bate in tye van ernstige nood? Jy help hulle,” sê Van Zyl. Agri SA het die regering versoek om noodhulp aan boere te verleen, in die vorm van óf staatswaarborge óf direkte hulp, via die strukture van die Landbank, agribesighede of spesiale –doel voertuie. “Enige hulp word verwelkom,” volgens Van Zyl.

’n Droogte is nie ‘n een-jaar verskynsel nie, kontantvloei en produksiekrediet-aangeleenthede sal met ons wees vir die volgende twee tot drie jaar,” sê van Zyl. Ons het ons eie fonds gestig en sal voortgaan om boere in nood by te staan, maar dit behels slegs ‘n druppel in die maatemmer *vis-à-vis* wat benodig word. Möller meld dat Agri SA tans kyk na ‘n langtermyn-rampfonds vir boere. Agri SA kan dit nie alleen doen nie en sal finansiële hulp vanaf die Tesourie, asook ander staatsentiteite, die privaatsektor en enige ander oord benodig.

Uitgereik deur Agri SA, Direktoraat: Korporatiewe Skakeling

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Agri SA calls on government to provide drought assistance

Farmers in certain parts of South Africa are battling to survive through the current season and Agri SA is very concerned about their viability going forward. Agri SA has done its utmost to assist these farmers in need with emergency measures being implemented across the country to provide feed and fodder to indigent farmers.

“It’s time for government to show its hand with assistance to commercial and small holder farmers” Johannes Moller, President of Agri SA stated. We represent a major tax base as the farming sector and as citizens of South Africa, taxpayers and contributors to the economy it’s a shame that the commercial and emerging farming sectors have not received any assistance from government “. To date we have not received a cent from government” Omri van Zyl, CEO of Agri SA remarked. It seems that government is ill equipped to deal with disasters of this magnitude, moreover it is concerning that the safety net for South Africans have been weakened to such an extent that assistance is not possible” van Zyl remarked.

Moller remarked that in comparison “South African Airlines has been sustained by state guarantees of ±R14.4 billion with an additional R5 billion from Treasury that was just approved. Eskom with state guarantees amounting to R466 billion has reached its "prudency" limit in this regard.

The turnover of the agriculture sector is approximately R227 billion per annum with a net tax contributor of approximately R50 billion in primary agriculture alone over the past 10 years. We employ more than 850 000 people in the sector and we are the only food secure country in Sub Saharan Africa “how do you protect this asset in times of dire need? You help them” van Zyl stated. Agri SA has called for emergency assistance from government, in either state guarantees or direct assistance to farmers through the structures of the Land Bank, Agribusinesses or special purpose vehicles. “Any assistance would be welcome” van Zyl remarked.

“A drought is not just a one-year event, and cash flow and production credit issues will be with us, for the next 2 to 3 years” van Zyl remarked. We have set up our own fund and will continue to provide assistance to farmers in need, but this is a drop in the ocean vis-à-vis what’s required. Moller mentioned that Agri SA will be looking at setting up a long term disaster fund for farmers. Agri SA cannot do it alone and will require financial muscle from treasury of other state entities, the private sector and any other contributors.

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